

REPORT ON THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROGRESS FFY 2000

Requirement - A report on the specific accomplishments and progress made in the past fiscal year toward meeting each goal and objective, including improved outcomes for children and families, and a more comprehensive, coordinated, effective child and family services continuum. Any revisions in the statement of goals and objectives or to the training plan, if necessary, to reflect changed circumstances

Goal 1: To ensure there is a system of prevention that reduces the number of families who enter the DCFS child welfare system (Project Prevention).

Objective 1: To identify families at risk for entering the DCFS child welfare system.
[Community Based Family Support, Family Preservation]

Outcome: To understand the characteristics of families that typically need child welfare services so that services can be designed to address the problems that would require their entry into the child welfare system.

Task 1: Collect baseline data of families currently receiving child welfare services and produce a report identifying the characteristics of these families. Accomplish Date: July 31, 2000

STATUS - On target. A statewide, comprehensive needs analysis of DCFS was completed. The purpose of the needs analysis was to identify existing resources as well as unmet needs. The results of the analysis were disseminated to DCFS staff in June 2000.

Task 2: Develop a profile of families that may enter the DCFS child welfare system.
Accomplish Date: September 30, 2000

STATUS – On target

Lead Responsibility: Planning and Policy Unit.
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Objective 2: To identify resources, which provide services to children and their families in each community. [Community-Based Family Support, Family Preservation Services]

Outcome: To know the services that are already in place to serve children and their families and to prevent their need for entry into the child welfare system, so that unmet service needs can be identified and planned for.

Task 1: Complete an inventory of available resources that offer services to children and their families (prevention, in-home and out-of-home) in each county. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

STATUS - On target. A statewide, comprehensive needs analysis of DCFS was completed. The purpose of the needs analysis was to identify existing resources as well as unmet needs. The results of the analysis were disseminated to DCFS staff in June 2000.

Task 2: Develop a report identifying services currently available and unmet service needs, by county. Accomplish Date: September 30, 2000

Lead Responsibility: Planning and Policy Unit

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services and Office of Systems and Technology - CHRIS staff

Objective 3: To develop a system to inform DCFS county staff of available services.
[Community-Based Family Support, Family Preservation]

Outcome: Direct service staff will know of available resources so that they may appropriately refer children and families needing services.

Task 1: Design a system for maintaining current resource information on CHRIS.
Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

STATUS – as of 6/05/2000: Programming changes have been made to revise resource information in CHRIS. Resource modifications will be included in the next CHRIS Release that will have programming completed by June 30th with implementation in July.

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services, Community Support, and Offices of Systems and Technology - CHRIS staff

Secondary Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit, Community Services

Objective 4: Develop a system to plan for needed resources that are not available.
[Community-Based Family Support, Family Preservation]

Outcome: Services that are needed by children and their families will be developed to the extent possible.

Task 1: Design a planning system for services that are needed, but not available, to the extent possible. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2001

Lead Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Objective 5: To enhance the volunteer workforce to support the efforts of DCFS to reduce the number of families entering our system. [Community-Based Family Support, Family Preservation]

Outcome 1: Increased manpower resources to prevent children and their families from unnecessarily entering the child welfare system.

Outcome 2: Decrease the number of families entering the child welfare system by 10%.

Task 1: Research and develop a plan for an enhanced DCFS volunteer program. Accomplish Date: January 1, 2001

Task 2: Develop an evaluation tool for the program. Accomplish Date: March 31, 2001

Task 3: Begin implementation of a pilot volunteer program in at least one county per DCFS area, ensuring diversity in population. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2001

Task 4: Collect and analyze data on program performance. Evaluate results and make recommendations e.g., eliminate the program, revise the program, or replicate the program in other counties. Accomplish Date: January 1, 2003

Task 5: If recommended, complete state wide implementation. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2003

Task 6: Issue a report on program progress and outcomes. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2004

Primary Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services, Division of Volunteerism, CASA

Goal 2: Ensure DCFS' capacity to provide for the safety and well being of children and family members in the home.

Objective 1: Enhance Intensive Family Services (IFS) program statewide. [Family Preservation, Time Limited Family Support]

Outcome 1: Reduce percentage of children who might be placed if intensive services are not available

Outcome 2: Reduce average time a child remains in out-of home care by 10%.

Task 1: IFS Task Force will be formed with leadership from Central Office Community Services and representatives from Professional Development, Contract Management Unit, Policy and Planning, Quality Assurance, Community Services field staff and provider representatives. Accomplish Date: February 1, 2000

STATUS – Revised to Research and develop an information system identifying the families referred for IFS and the characteristics of those families. Accomplishment Date: June 30, 2001

Primary Responsibility: Community Services and Community Support, Planning Unit
Secondary Responsibility: Professional Development, Contract Management Unit, Policy and Planning and Quality Assurance.

Task 2: IFS Task Force will receive consultation from the National Resource Center on Family Based Services. Accomplish Date: February 1, 2000

**STATUS – Revised to Monitor and evaluate services provided to IFS families.
Accomplishment Date: June 30, 2001**

Primary Responsibility: Community Services
Secondary Responsibility: Professional Development, Contract Management Unit, Policy and Planning and Quality Assurance.

Task 3: IFS Task Force will develop a plan for enhanced IFS capacity statewide.
Accomplish Date: March 1, 2000

**STATUS – Revised to: Research available information on intensive family preservation services and programs; consult with experts and with other states.
Accomplishment Date: June 30, 2001**

Primary Responsibility: Community Services
Secondary Responsibility: Professional Development, Contract Management Unit, Policy and Planning and Quality Assurance.

Task 4: Implement plan for enhanced IFS capacity. Accomplish Date: 7/1/2003

STATUS – Revised to: Apply results of research and monitoring/evaluation of the IFS program regarding practice, policy, and contractual performance indicators. Accomplishment Date: June 30, 2002 Analyze, design, and implement plans to increase the availability of IFS statewide. Accomplishment Date: June 30, 2002

Primary Responsibility: Community Services
Secondary Responsibility: Professional Development, Contract Management Unit, Policy and Planning and Quality Assurance.

Objective 2: Develop and maintain a statewide, county by county, automated directory of service providers (contracted and non-contracted). [Family Preservation, Time-Limited Reunification]

Outcome 1: More timely placement of children when necessary.

Outcome 2: Better and more timely matching of families needs to available resources.

Task 1: Design a system for maintaining current resource information on CHRIS.

Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

STATUS – as of 6/05/2000: Programming changes are in place to revise resource information in CHRIS. Resource modifications will be included in the next CHRIS Release that will have programming completed by June 30th with implementation in July.

Lead Responsibility: Office of Systems and Technology - CHRIS staff, LARP

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services, Community Support and Administrative Services

Objective 3: Develop a system to plan for development of needed resources for in-home service delivery. [Family Preservation]

Task 1: Based on resource identification (Goal 1, Objective 2) develops a report identifying in-home services currently available and those needed, but not available, by county.

Accomplish Date: September 30, 2000

STATUS – As part of developing the Angela R Plan, a number of issues were identified around the need for a plan in developing resources. A meeting is scheduled to include a number of community, provider, advocacy and local service staff to who serve children and families in Arkansas.

Lead Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services and Office of Systems and Technology - CHRIS staff

Task 2: Design a planning system for services that are needed, but not available, to the extent possible. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2001

Lead Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Goal 3: Ensure DCFS' capacity to provide services focused on the health, safety, and reunification or other permanency goals for children in out-of-home placement.

Objective 1: Increase the number of foster homes by 20%. The increase will include foster homes that will accept children that DCFS has historically found difficult to place (e.g., males, teens, sibling groups, etc.) and will reflect the ethnic/racial diversity of the children entering foster care

[Family Preservation, Time-Limited Reunification]

Outcome 1: More timely placements.

Outcome 2: Fewer disrupted placements.

Outcome 3: More timely achievement of reunification or other permanency goals.

Task 1: County DCFS offices will define the number and types of foster homes needed, but do not have them. Accomplish Date: January 1, 2000

STATUS – On target. In state fiscal year 2000 the goal was to recruit 80 new homes per quarter. DCFS has exceeded that number of homes to recruit in each quarter.

Primary Responsibility: Community Services

Task 2: A plan will be developed for each county and for the state, to recruit the types of homes that are needed. Accomplish Date: February 1, 2000

Primary Responsibility: Community Services

Secondary Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit, MidSOUTH

STATUS – On target. Each Area Manager submitted a Foster Family Needs Assessment for each county. This needs assessment identified the types of foster homes needed for each county. This was provided to the Foster Parent Recruiters to use, as a guide for the types of homes needed to be recruited. This assessment is completed annually.

Objective 2: A system of mental health services will be developed.

[Family Preservation, Time-Limited Reunification, Adoption Support]

Outcome 1: Children and their families will receive better mental health services.

Outcome 2: Children entering foster care because they need mental health services will be reduced.

Task 1: Develop a plan for the implementation of managed care in DCFS. Accomplish Date: 31 December 2000.

STATUS – In September 1999, DCFS formed an implementation work group to prepare for mental health managed care. Arkansas Behavioral Care (ABC), the managed care provider, participated in that work group. This group developed an implementation plan. The managed care program was implemented statewide on March 1, 2000. The Managed Care contract was terminated effective June 1, 2000. Due to the contract termination, DCFS is working with the Council of Community Mental Health Centers and other providers to develop a transition plan for mental health services for foster children and a long-range plan for mental health services.

Task has been revised to the following: Develop a system for mental health services for foster children and other children served by the Division

New completion date: July 1, 2001

Primary Responsibility: LARP

Secondary Responsibility: Quality Assurance, Division of Mental Health, Community Mental Health Providers

Objective 3: Create a system of support for adoptive parents, including Adoptive Parents Support Groups in each DCFS area, and a statewide newsletter on adoption that could be distributed to adoptive parents and adoption-related community service providers and advocates and other appropriate people and organizations. [Adoption Support]

Outcome 1: Fewer disrupted adoptions.

Outcome 2: Greater availability of adoptive parents.

Task 1: Develop and implement a plan for the creation and support of at least one adoptive parent support group in each DCFS area. Accomplish Date: January 1, 2000

STATUS – On target. Areas II, V and X have developed adoption support groups at this time.

Primary Responsibility: Community Services, UALR School of Social Work

Secondary Responsibility: Policy and Planning Unit

Task 2: Develop a statewide newsletter on adoption. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2000

STATUS – need to revise the time frame to January 1, 2001.

Primary Responsibility: Community Services, UALR School of Social Work
Secondary Responsibility:

Objective 4: To ensure the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanency placements for waiting children. [Adoption Support]

Outcome 1: No adoption will be delayed or denied when an approved family is available outside the jurisdiction with responsibility for handling the case of the child.

Outcome 2: An increase in the adoption rate annually of 10% by 2001.

Task 1: Research the Criteria and Approval Standards for adoptive families in other states.
Accomplish Date: July 1, 2000

STATUS – Task completed. There is a process that is currently used by the Adoptions unit in making adoption placements in other states. If an appropriate adoptive family is located in another state, the home study conducted by a licensed agency that approved the family as an adoptive family is requested. If the home study reveals that the home does not meet all standards then a plan is coordinated with ICPC to bring the home into compliance.

Primary Responsibility: Policy and Planning
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Task 2: Review the ICPC process to determine barriers to timely placement and make recommendations to address those barriers. Accomplish Date: April 1, 2000

STATUS – The ICPC unit has an automated system place on the computers, that will track all in- state and out of state referrals more better. The Interstate Compact on Juveniles will be handle by the Division of Youth Services on July 1,2000. ICPC staff will be cross trained and cases will be distributed with one worker having A to L and M to Z

Primary Responsibility: Community Services
Secondary Responsibility: Quality Assurance; Policy and Planning

Task 3: Research the current usage of finders fee for adoption of children with special needs and prepare a report with recommendation. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2000

STATUS – Upon discussing this task with adoptions staff it is recommended that we extend the completion date to coincide with task four (4) of this objective.

New completion date - October 1, 2000

Primary Responsibility: Policy and Planning

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Task 4: If decision is made to utilize finders' fees, develop plan to do so, including determination of fee scale, contract or agreement. Accomplish Date: October 1, 2000

Primary Responsibility: Policy and Planning

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Objective 5: To ensure compliance with ASFA transition rules for filing a petition to terminate parental rights when a child has been in Foster Care 15 of the most recent 22 months

Outcome: TPR petitions will be filed unless a compelling reason exists on 1/3 of all cases by October 29, 1999; 2/3 of all cases by April 29, 2000; and on all of the cases by October 29, 2000.

Task 1: Workers in conjunction with Office of Chief Counsel will conduct Permanency Planning Hearings in accordance to policy.

Task 2: OCC will review 100% of their cases in July 1999, to assure compliance.

Task 3: CHRIS will continue the development of a monitoring tool to track children in care 15 of 22 months.

Task 4: DCFS will coordinate efforts with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) to implement ASFA requirements. Accomplish Date: October 29, 2000

STATUS – On target; OCC has reviewed all cases, CHRIS produces a Permanency Planning Detail report on a monthly basis for OCC and area staff and efforts are currently being coordinated with the Administrative Offices of the Courts specifically

Responsibility - Community Services, Office of Chief Counsel, Coordination with Administrative Offices of the Court.

Goal 4: Enhance automated systems to increase the agency's capacity to administer and manage fiscal and programmatic requirements.

Objective 1: Enhance CHRIS fiscal capabilities to allow for payment of foster care board and adoption subsidies, for tracking obligations against appropriations/budgets, and for production of monthly fiscal status reports.

Outcome: More appropriate utilization of taxpayers money by the availability of more timely and accurate financial information. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

Task 1: CHRIS will be enhanced to allow for payment of foster care board and adoption subsidies and be ability to track expenditures from the system. June 30, 2000

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services, Office of System & Technology
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services, Policy and Planning

STATUS – as of 6/05/2000: Foster Care Board Payments and Adoption Subsidies. Programming changes are in place to revise board payment information in CHRIS. Board payment modifications will be included in the next CHRIS Release that will have programming completed by June 30th with implementation in July. Also as part of this financial process, the Foster Care Trust Accounting process is being transferred to a new accounting system.

STATUS - as of 6/05/2000: Obligations Against Appropriations Budgets Monthly Fiscal Status Reports - A DHS Purchase Order and Obligation Tracking Report is available for DHS divisions which identifies purchase orders and obligations and compares to budgeted information. This reporting process is currently being reviewed by the DCFS CFO as part of the DHS CFO team across all divisions.

Objective 2: Enhance CHRIS so that it is a complete and accurate directory of service resources.

Outcome 1: Improved services to clients through instant accessibility to resources for field or organizational staff.

Outcome 2: Ability to accurately report data to key management areas.

Outcome 3: Enhanced ability for accurate program & fiscal planning.

Task 1: CHRIS will be enhanced to allow for field staff to access information about resources.

Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

Responsibility: Administrative Services, Office of Systems & Technology

Status as of 6/05/2000: Programming changes are in place to revise resource information in CHRIS. Resource modifications will be included in the next CHRIS Release that will have programming completed by June 30th with implementation in July.

Objective 3: Identify and train staff responsible for maintaining and updating the resources within the directory.

Outcome 1: Improved services to clients through instant accessibility to resources for field/organizational staff.

Outcome 2: Ability to accurately report data to key management areas.

Outcome 3: Enhanced ability for accurate program & fiscal planning.

Task 1: Identify staff responsible for maintaining and updating resources. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

Task 2: Train staff responsible for maintaining and updating resources.

Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

Status for task 1 and 2 as of 6/05/2000: Programming changes are in place to revise resource information in CHRIS. Resource modifications will be included in the next CHRIS Release that will have programming completed by June 30th with implementation in July. Training will be coordinated via the MidSOUTH Academy in accordance with the training facilities and their availability.

Primary Responsibility: CHRIS, Office of Systems & Tech., and MidSOUTH

Secondary Responsibility: Community Service

Objective 4: Develop an automated eligibility determination system.

Outcome 1: Elimination of duplication of effort in eligibility determination.

Outcome 2: Compliance with SACWIS regulations.

Outcome 3: Timely eligibility determination.

Task 1: Design and develop the automated eligibility determination system. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

Status as of 6/05/2000: Detail specifications for Eligibility Determination is in final review.

Programming changes will be in place to automate Eligibility Determination in CHRIS. Based on the recent ANSWER Pilot implementation in DCO, CHRIS modifications will be interfacing with the new application versus the mainframe eligibility determination system. Eligibility modifications will be included in the CHRIS 4.0 Release that will have programming completed by August with implementation by October.

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services, and Office of Systems & Technology

Objective 5: Increase CHRIS' ability to produce ad hoc reports.

Outcome 1: Improved services to clients through organizational ability to have information to use in planning for service delivery.

Outcome 2: Quicker response time for answering requests for information.

Outcome 3: Increased ability to monitor compliance with state/federal regulations.

Task 1: Design and implement DCFS' ability to produce ad hoc reports. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

Primary Responsibility: LARP and Office of System Technology

Status as of 6/05/2000: Internal Intranet report distribution has been introduced this fiscal year. Also, reporting tools have been implemented which have increased the ad hoc ability for technical staff. A reporting database has been built with a production cycle to improve the amount of time to produce standard point-in-time reports working with the reporting groups across DHS.

Objective 6: Develop automated financial contract monitoring system. (The Cougar System will be used to help address system development.)

Outcome: Increase quality of services received through contract funding.

Task 1: Design an automated financial contract monitoring system. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2001

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services, Division of Administrative Services
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services, Office of Systems and Technology - CHRIS staff

Objective 7: Automated Program Needs Assessment.

Outcome: Increase quality of services through improved planning that is made possible by information obtained through an automated needs assessment.

Task 1: Design an automated program needs assessment. Accomplish Date: June 30, 2003

Primary Responsibility: LARP, Office of Systems and Technology - CHRIS staff
Secondary Responsibility: Administrative Services, Community Services

Objective 8: Develop "Smart Card: Electronic Benefit Transfer System" for all families/children serviced by DCFS.

Outcome: Improved services through automated ability to purchase goods and services for foster children

Task 1: Develop system for use of smart card; plan for training staff and foster parents.
Accomplish Date: June 30, 2004

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services, Office of Systems and Technology - CHRIS Staff

Goal 5: The Division of Children and Family Services will recruit, train and retain qualified staff in sufficient numbers to meet family centered and supervisory standards.

Objective 1: Development of a positive recruitment plan and promotional packet.

Outcome: Improved service delivery.

Task 1: Enhancement of web-site pages listing current vacancies within DCFS. Accomplish Date: June 1, 2000

Status – The Department of Human Services web site has page with a listing of all vacancies, continuously advertised positions, pay scale instructions on how to apply for job and the job application.

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services, Staff Development, and LARP
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Task 2: Removal of negative language contained in the Career Opportunities Bulletin.
Accomplish Date: March 1, 2000

Primary Responsibility: Administrative Services
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Objective 2: In collaboration with the Academy for Family-Centered Training, DCFS will maintain, and modify, as needed, a division-wide agenda for leadership development, including case supervisory training, mentoring and other supports.

Outcome 1: Improved services through better-trained and qualified staff.
Outcome 2: Decrease in contempt of court citations.
Outcome 3: Decrease in error rate in Quality Assurance.
Outcome 4: Increase in percentages on the Compliance Outcome Report.
Outcome 5: The rate of cases that close, and remain closed will increase.

Task 1: Creation of a curriculum for leadership development
Accomplish date: June 30, 2001

Primary Responsibility: The Academy for Family-Centered Training
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Objective 3: The Division will develop a competency based training program.

Outcome: Improved services through quality training that is more focused to worker's particular needs

Task 1: Competency based training program will be planned and implemented.
Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

STATUS - The curriculum for pre-service FSW training was revised in 1999 to incorporate CHRIS training and to alter contents to reflect FPU role in investigations. The curriculum is based on a competency model and is measurable. In addition, a Individual Training Needs Assessment has been designed and it is currently be used. Both worker and supervisor complete it to identify the workers training needs and develop a training plan.

Primary Responsibility: MidSOUTH
Secondary Responsibility: Administrative Services, Community Services

Objective 4: The Division will develop worker incentive initiatives.

Outcome: Improved services through retention of trained workers.

Task 1: Options to assure staffing standard of 15 cases per worker will be developed, addressing vacancy ratios. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2000

STATUS – A committee has been established and recommendations formulated to complete the following: method to count caseloads, system to correct and update the CHRIS database regarding staff assignments, identification of staff who will keep information up to date in CHRIS and a draft caseload report currently in review. In addition, DCFS is exploring a case weighting methodology for determining caseloads to Area Managers and Central Office staff.

Additional areas currently under review include adoption recruitment and post adoption services, home studies, how to count supervisor caseloads etc. This task is on target.

Primary Responsibility: Planning, and Quality Assurance - LARP

Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

Task 2: Causes of worker stress will be reviewed, and options to decrease stress recommended. Accomplish Date: July 1, 2000

STATUS – The Planning Unit has developed a database to collect terminations of employees in the last 6 months. The Unit is using two sources of information; the personnel form completed when an employee leaves the agency and the exit interview form that seeks additional information. In coordination with the Department's Research and Statistics Unit, the Planning Unit will analyze information about the terminations, including but not limited to geographical distribution of the terminations, reasons given, and length of employment prior to the termination.

Primary Responsibility: Planning Unit, Community Services

Task 3: Utilization of flexible scheduling.

Accomplish Date: January 1, 2000

Primary Responsibility: Community Services

Task 4: Inclusion in competency based training program of stress and time management.
Accomplish Date: June 30, 2000

STATUS - These topics are covered in the current FSW pre-service curriculum. This curriculum is a part of the CORE training that is provided to all Family Service Workers prior to assumption of their caseload.

Primary Responsibility: LARP, MidSOUTH
Secondary Responsibility: Community Services

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

Requirement - For States, a description of the child protective, child welfare, family preservation, family support, time- limited family reunification services, adoption promotion and support services, and independent living services to be provided in the upcoming fiscal year highlighting any additions or changes in services or program design and including the information required in 45 CFR 1357.15(n The State's CFSP must describe the publicly funded child and family services continuum: child welfare services (including child abuse and neglect prevention, intervention, and treatment services; and foster care); family preservation services; family support services; and services to support reunification, adoption, kinship care, independent living, or other permanent living arrangements.

Requirement - For States only, the information required to meet the maintenance of effort (non-supplantation) requirement in section 432(a)(7) of the Act and Federal regulation at 45 CFR 1357.32(f) (maintenance of effort);

DCFS continues to use its state and federal dollars to fund programs for clients who come to the attention of the Division. Clients enter the services system at any point based on their need for services. Casework, case planning, referral and case management are provided by DCFS staff. The Division approves and supervises foster homes. An array of services are purchased from child welfare agencies, private psychiatric hospitals, community-based agencies, universities, other state divisions, licensed individuals, hospitals, etc. Services range from prevention to adoption or other permanent living situations.

Purchased Child Welfare Services include the following:

- Statewide medical for foster children through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Dept of Pediatrics.
- Therapy, diagnosis and assessment services for adolescent sexual offenders through a contract with the University of Arkansas Medical School's Dept of Pediatrics (ASAP).
- Individual, family, marital and group therapy and various individual and group counseling services from private agencies, mental health associations, or private practitioners throughout the state.
- Parenting education and support classes.
- Childcare for individuals who are in an alcohol drug treatment program to enable them to participate.
- Professional language interpreters statewide when serving families that do not speak English.
- Provide support groups for children that are sexually abused.
- Provide supervised visitation.
- Services to disabled children.
- Emergency shelters for children, runaways and teens.
- Purchased services to children in the custody and care of DCFS include; therapeutic foster home programs, psychiatric residential treatment, comprehensive residential treatment, residential treatment, respite care, health services, independent living.

The Division uses Title IV-B, Part 2 monies for the following:

- Family Preservation (Protection and Support) - Intensive Family Services, Respite Care, Psychological Evaluations, Drug Screening, Paternity Testing a wraparound program.
- Family Support: Human Service Workers in the Schools, family resource centers, latchkey children's initiative, and alternative caregivers support groups, Intensive Family Services step-down programs, enrichment programs and tutoring services
- Adoption Support: Home studies, adoption home studies, recruitment and life books, foster parent visitation for finalized adoption, respite care, and adoptive parent training.
- Time Limited Family Re-Unification: Intensive Family Services, substance abuse counseling, substance abuse treatment, psychological evaluation services, drug screening.

The Division does not use the Federal funds under title IV-B, subpart 2, to supplant Federal or non-Federal funds for existing family preservation and family support services.

REVISIONS TO THE TRAINING PLAN

Requirement - Information on activities in the areas of training, technical assistance, research, evaluation, or management information systems that will be carried out in the upcoming fiscal year in support of the goals and objectives in the plan

Training Update - 2000 – 2001 Academic Partnership in Public Child Welfare

A new contract with UAF will begin 7/1/00 and includes partnering with a number of colleges such as Arkansas State University, Arkansas Tech University, Harding, PSC, Southern Arkansas University, UALR, UAM, and UAPB. UAF will participate on the professional development team (PDT) with DCFS and MidSOUTH as well as meet regularly with DCFS in order to oversee the work of the academic partnership.

The partner universities will provide the following educational activities:

- Field education units in DCFS county offices, juvenile courts, and schools. Stipend students with a commitment to work for DCFS after graduation and other students in field placement will work with DCFS families under the supervision of university professional staff.
- Mentoring for new family service worker (Family Service Workers) trainees. University professional staff will teach competencies in the field to new Family Service Workers upon referral by supervisors.
- Casework practice education for Family Service Workers. Skill improvement needs identified by panel review or individual training needs assessment (ITNA) will be taught in the field by university professional staff upon referral by supervisors.
- Educational Support Centers. State of the art child welfare resources will be purchased and maintained on-line for checkout by DCFS staff, child welfare faculty, and students.
- Continuing Education. DCFS staff, university faculty, and students preparing for employment with DCFS will be able to attend out of state conferences and seminars in child welfare. Continuing education based on information from these conferences and seminars will be provided to DCFS staff and university faculty.
- Curriculum development. University interdisciplinary committees focus on updating and infusing child welfare course content for social work and other degree programs.

2000 – 2001 Partnership for Public Child Welfare

A new contract with UALR to begin 7/1/00 includes the School of Social Work and MidSOUTH Center for Leadership and Training. A Professional Development Team (PDT) comprised of representatives from DCFS and MidSOUTH and the academic partnership will oversee all aspects of training under this contract.

MidSOUTH will deliver, through its training staff and five (5) training academy sites and using contracted trainers at off site locations, all DCFS pre-service and core training. Training will be provided to for supervisors, family service workers (FSW), social service aides (SSA), and foster/adoptive parents, as well as hotline operators and investigators of child abuse with the Arkansas State Police. MidSOUTH will also provide continuing education for DCFS staff and foster parents to help meet the number of hours of training mandated on an annual basis.

Children's Reporting and Information System (CHRIS) training will be provided during FSW pre-service training, for DCFS releases of new technology, and in county offices and MidSOUTH computer labs to address identified problems.

The following training support activities necessary to provide training or manage the system are part of this contract:

- Curricula development and revision for all pre-service and core training and continuing education offerings and production of trainer/trainee manuals.
- Individual Training Needs Assessment (ITNA) for FSWs, supervisors, and foster parents will inform the system of continuing education by identifying competencies for which training is needed. Data from ITNAs will be compiled for counties, areas, and the state.
- Management of a training database that will track training provided and staff trained.
- Statewide coordination and management of technology training and distance education.
- Maintenance of a child welfare resource center and checkout services for DCFS staff, students, and faculty.
- Planning and evaluation related to training and the DCFS workforce.

The Department of Social Work will provide all the educational services available through the Academic Partnership as well as an MSW degree program for DCFS staff on approved educational leave.

Independent Living

Training will be provided to help foster parents, adoptive parents, workers in group homes and case managers understand and address the issues confronting adolescents preparing for independent living, and must, to the extent possible, coordinate such training with the independent living program conducted for adolescents. It is incorporated into the curriculum of CORE and the Foster/Adopt Pride curriculum

Total budget for the contract with University of Arkansas at Little Rock

\$4,974,132

Total budget for the contract with the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville

\$2,816,716

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

Requirement - A description of the States' and Indian Tribes' progress and accomplishments made with regard to the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflects the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed. (See section 422(b)(9) of the Act);

A survey was conducted with all Adoption Specialists, the central office Adoption Unit and all of the Area Managers to determine the recruitment activities accomplished this year. A number of innovative and creative recruitment efforts for both prospective foster and adoptive parents were undertaken in the last year. These activities were arranged and conducted in many of the counties in the state. Just to name a few, these included:

- Volunteers meeting with a large African-American church to talk to the members about opportunity to become a foster or adoptive parent.
- Staff setting up and manning an information booth at a local county fair that provided handouts and discussions with the public coming to the fair.
- A number of counties reported meeting with community organizations and churches to give presentations about becoming a foster or adoptive parent i.e. Kawanis, Rotary, Eastern Star, Masons, and the Ministerial Alliance to name a few.
- A number of counties reported placing newspaper articles, guest appearing on local radio shows and guest appearing on local cable television programs to talk to the public about becoming a foster or adoptive parent.
- An adoption picnic was held and was attended by adoptive parents, as well as prospective adoptive parents to share experiences of being adoptive parents.
- In one of the areas, a Christmas party was held with four counties participating in bringing current adoptive parents, prospective children waiting to be adoptive and prospective adoptive parents.
- Display booths were set up at a local K-Mart and several local libraries to share information about adoption and foster care.
- At a child abuse seminar during Child Abuse Prevention Month, the seminar included a segment on becoming a foster parent.
- A juvenile judge in one of the counties sent out letters to all of the churches to share information about the need for more foster parents and how to become a foster parent.
- The wife of the governor provides public service announcements in which she introduces a waiting child to be adopted. She spotlights a new child each month.
- The Division has created a web site that has pictures of children and a biography of each child for the public to view. The Division has created a web site that gives information to the public on how to become a foster parent.

CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES TO FACILITATE TIMELY ADOPTIVE OR PERMANENT PLACEMENTS

Requirement - A description of the States' and Indian Tribes' plans for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children. (See section 422(b)(12) of the Act). This applies to States and Indian Tribes applying for title IV-B, subpart 1, funds;

The number of finalized adoptions is increasing. During the federal fiscal year in 1998, 251 adoptions were finalized. The preliminary number for the 1999 federal fiscal year is approximately 278. IV-B and adoption incentive monies have been utilized for recruiting adoptive families. When a child is legally freed for adoption, the child's Adoption Specialist considers approved adoptive applicants statewide and from out of state. A computer matching system used by staff assists in this process. We also consider approved adoptive applicants from other states once the public adoption agency or a private, licensed adoption agency has completed a home study.

The Division has an adoption web site that features a photograph and brief description of children who are waiting for an adoptive family. We are receiving inquiries from families within Arkansas and from other states. At this time an out-of-state approved applicant may be selected in the near future for a child who is featured on the web site.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT

Requirement - An update on the "... specific measures taken by the State to comply with the Indian Child Welfare Act" [See section 422(b)(11) of the Act];

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA): Arkansas has no recognized tribes within the state. DCFS complies with ICWA on a case-by-case basis. When a child who is identified as a member of a tribe comes to the attention of the Division, the child is referred to the DHS Office of Chief Council. That office contacts tribal officials to determine whether or not the tribe will take jurisdiction of the case.

Procedures are reflected in the DCFS Policy and Procedures Manual. Policy states before placing a child into foster care, the worker “Contact the OCC Attorney immediately if there is any indication that the child is a member of an Indian tribe.” For Birth Parents Relinquishing Infants for Adoption, policy states “Comply with the Indian Child Welfare Act if there is Indian ancestry in either parent’s family.” In assessing and preparing a child for adoption policy states “Assure compliance to Indian Child Welfare Act, if applicable.” For selection of an adoptive family policy states “Assure compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act if applicable.” In the past year, the division has not placed any Native Americans in foster care.

ADOPTION INCENTIVE PAYMENT

Requirement - For those States receiving an adoption incentive payment, specify the services that have been, or will be, provided to children and families with the adoption incentive funds.

Response: Most of the adoption incentive monies are being directed towards recruiting African American families and families for teenagers. The remaining monies are for the purchase of books for the Adoption Specialist's resource libraries. These libraries are for use by adoptive families, staff, other professionals, the public, etc. In addition incentive monies were used to purchase color printers for Adoption Specialist (for printing materials and duplicating photographs of children for the purpose of recruiting adoptive families), and provision of training for adoptive families (via parent support groups, conferences, etc.).

**SPECIFIC MEASURES TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT
TERMINATION OF PARENTAL RIGHTS
CHANGES BASED ON ASFA**

Requirement - Please provide information on the specific measures taken to implement the transition rules that apply to section 475(5)(E) of the Act, and the outcomes of the implementation. See ACYF-CB-PI-98-14, August 20, 1998 regarding "new" and "current" children in foster care;

And - An update on the capacity of the State child welfare agency and the State judicial system to implement and meet the requirement to file a petition to terminate the parental rights of the child's parents, if the exclusions do not apply, when a child has been in foster care for 15 of the most recent 22 months.

The Division has completed a number of activities to assure that this has been accomplished. The following has been completed.

- 1) Updating the state Juvenile Code regarding termination of parental rights has been revised to reflect ASFA.
- 2) Agency policy and procedures have been revised to reflect the termination of parental rights as outlined in ASFA and the Arkansas Juvenile Code.
- 3) Training on the ASFA regulations was provided to all staff in the Division.
- 4) The agency's SACWIS system was enhanced to incorporate ASFA regulations.
- 5) The Division has created a monthly report entitled the "Permanency Planning Detail Report" that details children in care, length of time in care, last court date and other identifying information. This report is provided to the Department's Office of Chief Counsel as well as staff in the Division.
- 6) The Division contracts with a consultant firm for the purpose of determine the progress in implementing the various provisions of ASFA. This firm has provided three reports describing the Division progress towards ASFA .
- 7) Several tasks are described in the Annual Progress and Services Report.

KINSHIP CARE UPDATE

Kinship Care Update - A committee has been formed to identify the necessary impact of the Final Rules and Regulations. On March 22, a memo was sent to DCFS staff explaining that the new federal rule stated kinship homes must meet the same standards as regular foster homes. Staff identified all kinship homes and determined the standards they need to meet. Letters were sent to those kinship homes explaining the new requirements. Staff has scheduled foster/adopt pride training for those homes. Policy and procedures are currently being revised to reflect these changes. At this time, the Division is on track for bringing kinship homes into compliance with the final rules and regulations by the 9/27/00 deadline.

CAPTA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Requirement_ - Accomplishments to date under the CAPTA portion of the consolidated CFSP.

Accomplishments Include:

- A. Parenting education/support groups have been funded in sixty-two (62) counties. Parents who attended these sessions received training on child development, behavior management, anger control, and self-esteem using a mixture of didactic, discussion, and experiential methods. Participants are given a pre-test and post-test to measure mastery.

Parenting education/support is court ordered for many clients as a condition of allowing children to return home or as a prevention to foster care placement. Group participants are encouraged to think of their participation not only as educational, but also as a positive social experience. The members view the group as a supportive and safe environment which provides them an opportunity to interact with other members experiencing the same problems, build networks, share triumphs and stores. Babysitting services are available and refreshments are often served.

These parenting education/support groups are considered highly successful based upon feedback from the providers, county staff, and post-test results of participants. Participants demonstrate more appropriate parenting skills and an enhanced knowledge of child/adolescent behavior. This service has been a major component of our prevention and reunification efforts.

We have also enjoyed significant success with our “parenting from prison” program. These groups are held at the prison on a weekly basis. Funds are used to purchase materials, defray transportation costs, and provide some professional facilitation. This program is recognized in the community in assisting released inmates to reunite and effectively parent their children.

- B. We have non-offending caretaker support groups in four (4) counties. These groups have been instrumental in assisting participants dealing with the effects of sexual abuse disclosure within the family. Many of the caretakers are survivors of childhood sexual abuse and are taught to cope with issues of betrayal, anger, guilt, and loss. Empowering the caretaker allows them to support the victim child.

- C. Adult and adolescent sexual abuse offender groups are held in nine (9) counties. DCFS, law enforcement, and the Department of Corrections make referrals.

This type of group therapy is a long-term, intensive process and usually takes a long period for the therapist to establish rapport and trust with the offenders. The groups meet weekly and may continue up to twenty-four months. Emphasis is placed on acceptance of the responsibility for the abuse, recognition of predisposing factors toward re-offense, social skill building, stress reduction, and impulse control.

Acknowledgement of the success of this program has come from the social work, law enforcement, and the judiciary community. Facilitators immediately report treatment lapses.

- D. We have four areas who have providers facilitating groups supporting child victims of sexual abuse. These groups assist victim children in dealing with child sexual abuse and the associated stigma, coping with anger and depression, and feelings of shame and guilt.

Participants are encouraged to deal with their victimization and to break the cycle of inter-generation abuse by teaching them how to avoid making choices that negatively impact their own children.

This program has provided treatment to many victim children in an effective and cost-efficient manner.

- E. Purchase of professional consultation pursuant to reports of suspected medical neglect to disabled infants: The Division of Children and Family Services maintains an agreement with the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics for the availability of a physician to assist DCFS in responding to “Baby Doe” reports. The Division has policy covering the procedures for workers to follow. Due to having a licensed non-affiliated physician available to assist DCFS staff in assessment, we are assured of appropriate response.
- F. Purchase of consulting services to develop, implement, and monitor Citizen Review Panels: Arkansas has four (4) citizen review panels representative of the geographic and demographic composition of the state. These panels are designed to evaluate the child protective service system and are willing to work collaboratively to improve systems for abused and neglected children.
- G. Interpreter Services: Due to a pressing need around the state to have ready access to language interpreters/translators, we contracted to provide twenty-four hour, seven days a week, on-call interpreter service. These interpreters assist workers in conducting assessments or providing service to families who do not speak English.

- H. Alternative Caregiver Support Group: This is a new program being piloted in Pulaski County. Its purpose is to support the needs of kinship caregivers and focus on assistance in keeping children out of regular foster care.

The contractor offers prevention and intervention services to include, but not limited to, provision of information on custody and family law, parenting education including discipline, support groups, information on reunification with the birth parent, and information on drug abuse, violence, pregnancy prevention, and resources. The contractor makes counseling referrals when appropriate and reports progress to worker.

- I. Child Abuse Prevention Awareness: We have purchased materials and educational supplies supportive of Child Abuse Prevention Awareness Month and for our staff's skill/knowledge building. We've sent staff to training and conferences and promoted adoption opportunities for special needs children and adolescent/teen prevention seminars by paying honoraria and registration fees.

The aforementioned services funded by CAPTA significantly reduced child abuse and neglect and entry into foster care. Approximately seven percent (7%) of children receiving services experienced a true report of maltreatment within one year of initiation of services and only eight percent (8%) of children receiving services entered foster care within the year. Overall, Arkansas Division of Children and Family Services family preservation components are effectively building strong and stable families.

**FOR CAPTA
PROGRAM AREAS SELECTED FOR IMPROVEMENT**

Requirement - An update on the program areas selected for improvement from the nine areas in section 106(a) (1) through (9) of CAPTA;

Progress of Selected Areas

A. Developing, strengthening, and supporting child abuse and neglect prevention, treatment, and research programs in the public and private sectors.

We continue to recruit providers and train staff in service delivery toward our goal of statewide coverage.

We have been able to provide services supporting the reduction of child abuse and neglect statewide. Our providers are all qualified (education, licensure, certification, continuing education) to deliver services and all program managers are trained in evaluation.

We continue to work on our data tracking system to more effectively pinpoint areas needing corrective action. We are implementing a new system to allow program and area managers the capability of monitoring to determine if appropriate referrals are being made.

We are still experiencing difficulty in developing contracts in certain parts of the State. We continue working with neighborhood coalitions and are seeking their assistance in identifying qualified providers.

B. Programs to assist in obtaining or coordinating necessary services for families of disabled infants with life threatening conditions.

We continue to maintain a purchase order with the Arkansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to respond to reports of suspected medical neglect of a disabled infant and provide consultation in the form of review of the chart, or, if necessary, a physical examination of the child. Fortunately, we have had no referrals to this service.

In addition, we continue to support the adoption of disabled infants through community outreach programs, adoption conferences, speakers covering the topic of special needs children, and the purchase of resource and recruitment materials. Arkansas exceeded the baseline for finalized Adoption of special needs children in federal fiscal year 1998 and 1999.

**CAPTA STATE GRANT FUNDS AND ANY CHANGES IN
ACTIVITIES FOR FY 2001 FUND**

Requirement - An update of activities that the State intends to carry out with its CAPTA State Grant funds and any changes in activities for FY 2001 funds.

Arkansas plans to:

- Continue complying with identified CAPTA program areas 7 and 8 as they are very compatible with our goals and objectives related to family preservation.
- Adding CAPTA Area 5, developing, strengthening, and facilitating training opportunities and requirements for individuals overseeing and providing services to children and their families through the child protection system.
- For CAPTA Area 9, developing and enhancing the capacity of community-based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level. Because families' function best in healthy communities, the Division will continue to develop new partners, build upon existing partnerships, and apply primary prevention components when appropriate.
- To target the Arkansas Delta and the Southern region for determine their needs in service delivery. These areas are economically depressed with high rates of poverty. Meetings will be scheduled with local representation from the schools, judiciary, neighborhoods, health, and spirit communities in an attempt to identify providers.

THE SERVICES AND TRAINING PROVIDED UNDER THE CAPTA

Requirement - A description of the services and training provided under the CAPTA State Grant as required by section 106(b)(2)(C) of CAPTA;

All programs have been rewritten to contain more specificity covering outcomes. Evaluation tools have been revised and the parenting program has a pre- and post-test. Training will begin 07/01/2000 on the services referral system that will be a part of CHRIS. Program Managers are covering the ten areas training county staff on appropriate referrals and case documentation. This support will continue.

THE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM

Requirement - A description on how the Independent Living Program was coordinated with other child welfare services during FY 2000.

The Title IV-E Independent Living Program operated in unison with the Foster Care Program during FY2000 to improve information dissemination about the Independent Living Grant Program in the ten Children and Family Services areas in Arkansas. This was done to assist in the recruitment and training of foster parents, the recruitment of teens into the program and to provide the public with knowledge of what the program can do for foster teens. Information was shared with private facilities which house foster teens in an effort to further develop a working partnership wherein a broader spectrum of basic life-skills training could be provided to teens prior to their reaching the age of emancipation. A concerted effort was begun to search out professionals and academics that can assist the program in providing basic life-skills training at little or no cost to the grant program on an in-kind basis. These resources can provide real world information to the teens about short and long term situations that will affect them now and later as well as offering advice and support as a mentor would.

Information concerning the new CFCIP legislation was also shared with the DCFS Adoptions Unit. The new law allows services to be extended to foster teens who were and will be adopted. Arkansas has already opted to serve non-IV-E eligible and former foster teens and provides assistance to teens who continue in to areas of higher education or vocational training.